

Agency Information

AGENCY : FBI
RECORD NUMBER : 124-90055-10253

RECORD SERIES : HQ

AGENCY FILE NUMBER : CR 109-430-1246

Document Information

ORIGINATOR : FBI
FROM : MM
TO : HQ

TITLE :

DATE : 07/07/1954
PAGES : 4

SUBJECTS : ANTONIO DE VARONA

DOCUMENT TYPE : PAPER, TEXTUAL DOCUMENT
CLASSIFICATION : Unclassified
RESTRICTIONS : 4
CURRENT STATUS : Redact
DATE OF LAST REVIEW : 06/08/1998

OPENING CRITERIA : INDEFINITE

COMMENTS : MEMO

Released under the John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992 (44 USC 2107 Note). Case#:NW 54463 Date: 10-12-2017

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CARLOS PRIO SOCARRAS, Former President of Cuba
ROBERTO E. CANESSA, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of
El Salvador

July 7, 1954

An informant of known reliability has advised that he was contacted on June 26, 1954, by SEGUNDO CURTI, former Secretary of Interior under the PRIO regime in Cuba, and presently closely associated with CARLOS PRIO SOCARRAS in Miami. CURTI remarked that the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador, ROBERTO E. CANESSA, was scheduled to come to Miami within a few days to address the Chamber of Commerce of the Americas. He requested that the informant arrange an interview for him with Secretary CANESSA, stating that it was very important to do so.

Subsequently on June 29, 1954, the informant consulted Secretary CANESSA following his arrival in Miami, and explained to him the desires of SEGUNDO CURTI for an interview. CANESSA remarked, "I will be glad to meet with Secretary CURTI, but I do not think anything will be accomplished through that meeting because my government, through our representative in the Organization of the American States, has made clear its attitude concerning the Cuban problem."

The informant told Secretary CANESSA that he believed CURTI wanted to discuss with him a matter relating to Dr. PRIO's arrest and the resulting prosecution based upon the confiscation of armaments.

The informant quoted Secretary CANESSA as stating, "That is one of the most regrettable incidents to have occurred in the recent history of inter-American relations. It was a great mistake on the part of the American authorities. There are many ways to solve a problem of this magnitude without legal interventions and the resulting publicity. Those responsible for this incident, particularly the Justice Department, have set back the prestige of the United States, and if at the end, PRIO is found guilty, then the case will really be critical. PRIO is the Cuban constitutional president. I want you to know personally PRIO was never my friend, but above all we have to recognize the

DECLASSIFIED BY

kp6bjt/gcl

ON 12/4/85 #211326

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

ENCLOSURE

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 9-14-94 BY SP8 MAC/16R

(JFK)

109-430-1246

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

fact that PRIO, as the deposed constitutional president of a state, has the right to fight for the restoration of constitutional government in his country. Otherwise, he would not merit the slightest consideration from anyone. There is no doubt in my mind that PRIO broke the rules and regulations set forth by the laws of this country. But, why should the authorities act openly when PRIO could be decently called to Washington and in a secret meeting asked either to stop his activities or to leave United States territory?

"Right now, we have the most regrettable case of Guatemala. Who has been helping the rebels to depose a constitutional government? I do not think we have to dig very far to find out that there is a direct United States participation in it. This participation is not resented by anyone of us because we are all against any Communistic government in the Americas. We go further. We knowingly will deny that there is American participation in the revolutionary movement to depose the Arbenz government. Why then cannot PRIO's case be treated in the margin of existing laws, if by so doing the United States will preserve its prestige among its friends?

"PRIO's arrest and prosecution is a matter of local concern. Neither myself nor my government will ever intervene one way or the other in the PRIO case as we maintain the policy of non-intervention in local affairs. We merely regret that this case exists and I most sincerely believe that the entire thing should be brought to a halt and Dr. PRIO and his group 'invited' to depart from the United States with appropriate official explanations and satisfactions, as the fact is that local authorities have insulted the dignity and majesty of a constitutionally elected president who greatly cooperated with the United States Government.

"Of course, all these are my private reactions toward this most regrettable case. However, for the reasons I have explained to you, nothing officially can be said."

Informant said that Secretary CANESSA concluded by stating that he would be pleased to meet with CURTI following the reception that evening given by Mr. WALTER FREEMAN, Consul of El Salvador in Miami, F.D.I.

Immediately thereafter the informant contacted CURTI, who requested that the meeting be arranged to take place at the home of ELISEO RIERA GOMEZ, who is registered under the Foreign

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Agents Registration Act as a public relations agent for PRIO. CURTI stated that he would also invite TONY VARONA, President of PRIO's authentic party and also MARTINEZ FRAGA. This information was relayed to Secretary CANESSA, who requested that the meeting be postponed until ten o'clock the following morning.

Miami, FL

During the afternoon of June 29, ROBERTO MOLINO-MORALES, who is the Second Chief of Protocol of the Republic of El Salvador, and who accompanied Secretary CANESSA to Miami, advised the informant, "We all know that BATISTA is a double crosser; that all of his statements as far as democracy is concerned, are forced by circumstances. PRIO on the other hand, granted the Cuban people the greatest degree of freedom and democracy which had ever existed in Cuba. PRIO made some mistakes, such as the open support of the Caribbean Legion. We, the Salvadoran Government, were ready to secretly support the Caribbean Legion at the beginning because we welcomed the return of freedom and democracy to those of our sister republics who were under dictatorships. But, PRIO, with his open support to the Legion, curtailed any action by us. Perhaps, at the end, this proved to be best for us in El Salvador."

The informant stated that during the reception, Secretary CANESSA approached him privately, stating, "You know, I have been thinking very seriously about that interview with Secretary CURTI. I know I will not be able to promise him anything, as much as I would like to do so, as the smallest bit of information which might reach the State Department in Washington about this interview would embarrass me and my government. This is one of those problems where one has to sacrifice his own personal feelings and the dictates of good conscience in order to safeguard our good relations with Washington. I know the FBI, the Central Intelligence Agency, and other agencies in this country today watch very carefully each and every step any diplomat or official makes while not only visiting in the United States, but even in our own countries. This is a fact that we resent, but we cannot openly protest against this insulting and flagrant intervention because if we do so, our common enemy (Communism) will strengthen their propaganda. Because of all of these reasons, I beg of you to cleverly evade the appointment with CURTI. At the same time, after my departure, explain to him what I have told you."

Subsequently, the informant notified CURTI that Secretary CANESSA would be unable to see him and upon relaying this information to CANESSA, the latter told him that although he had

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~